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Appl. No. 10/796,215

Attorney Docket No. 10000-353
Client Reference No. PA-5377-RFB

I. Listing of Claims

1. (Previously Presented): A pusher assembly of a stent delivery system for use in a target duct or vessel having an acute bend at a known general location in the body of a patient, the pusher assembly comprising:

a first tubular portion being a non-rigid polymer tube;

a second tubular portion having a part extending distally from the first tubular portion, the second tubular portion including a flexible section and a stent-carrying section located distally to the flexible section; and

a soft pusher member configured to urge a self-expanding preloaded stent from an introducer catheter within which the preloaded stent is slidably disposed, the soft pusher member being disposed along the second tubular portion at a location which is either proximal to or within the stent-carrying section, the soft pusher member being made of a polymer and cooperating with the preloaded stent to absorb preload pressure of the preloaded stent when the soft pusher member is positioned at the acute bend in the body during deployment of the preloaded stent.

2. (Original): The assembly of Claim 1 wherein the flexible section of the second tubular portion has a preselected length and a location along the pusher assembly such that when the pusher assembly and the preloaded stent are disposed within the introducer catheter and are subjected to lateral bending stresses at the known general location in the body, the flexible section of the second tubular portion traverses the known general location in the body, whereby the likelihood of a kink occurring in the introducer catheter is greatest within a region corresponding to the region of greatest flexibility of the pusher assembly.

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